

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 1, with the following amended paragraph:

B3
Optionally, the sheath 12 may include a side port 19 that communicates with the lumen 16, for example, to allow the infusion of fluids into the lumen 16, through the sheath 12. Alternatively, or in addition, the side port 19 may be used to provide a "bleed back" indicator, such as that disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 6,626,918~~co-pending application Serial No. _____~~, filed ~~October 6, 2000~~, entitled "Apparatus and Methods for Positioning a Vascular Sheath," which is assigned to the assignee of the present invention. The disclosure of this ~~patent application~~ and any references cited therein are expressly incorporated herein.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 27, line 5, with the following amended paragraph:

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A plurality of splines 164 are provided on the distal portion 160 that may be selectively expandable between a substantially collapsed configuration (shown in FIG. 7A) and a substantially transverse expanded configuration (shown in FIG. 7B). Preferably, the splines 164 are substantially rigid or semi-rigid elements that include hinged regions 166a, 166b and[,] 168 that facilitate expansion substantially transversely with respect to a longitudinal axis 113 of the locator member 114. In one embodiment, each spline 164 is a single piece that includes a plurality of living hinges 166a, 166b and[,] 168. Alternatively, each spline 164 may include multiple segments that are connected by pins or other hinges (not shown). In a preferred embodiment, the distal portion 160 includes four equally spaced splines 164, although the locator member 14 may include more or fewer splines without deviating from the scope of the present invention. Optionally, the splines 164 may include radiopaque markers (not shown), similar to the embodiment described above.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 30, line 1, with the following amended paragraph:

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In a further alternative, shown in FIG. 9, a locator member 214 may be provided that includes splines 264a, 264b that may be selectively expanded to different angles. A locator

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actuator (not shown) may allow controlled expansion of the splines 264a, 264b to desired angles with respect to the longitudinal axis 213 of the locator member. For example, a cable or other control wire (not shown) may be extend from the locator actuator to each of the splines 264a, 264b, e.g., through a lumen (not shown) in the locator body 232. Each cable may be directed axially to selectively expand or collapse the spline 264a, 264b connected to the respective cable.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 30, line 12, with the following amended paragraph:

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For example, a spline 264b on the posterior side of the locator member 214 (away from the surface of the patient's skin) may be expanded towards the proximal end of the locator member 214 at an acute angle "alpha," i.e., corresponding substantially to the angle of the passage through the patient's skin to the vessel 90, e.g., about thirty or forty five degrees. In contrast, the spline 264a on the anterior side of the locator member 214 (i.e. towards the surface of the patient's skin) may be expanded away from the proximal end of the locator member 214 at an oblique angle of one hundred eighty degrees less "alpha." Thus, the splines 264a, 264b may be expanded to predetermined angles that facilitate better contact with the wall of the vessel, e.g., to better "present" the vessel wall during deployment of a closure element.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 32, line 1, with the following amended paragraph:

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For example, the sheath 20 12 may be positioned through a puncture 92 into a vessel 90, e.g., to perform a procedure within a patient's vasculature, as described above. The locator member 314 may then be inserted into the sheath 12 until the distal portion 317 extends beyond the distal end 20 of the sheath 12. The splines 364 may then be expanded, and the sheath 12 and locator member 314 manipulated to a desired position, e.g., such that the splines 364 contact the wall 98 of the vessel 90, thereby providing a tactile indication of the position of the sheath 12.